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**DISABILITY COMMISSION**  
**(Joint Meeting with Grafton Cable Oversight**  
**Committee)**

Wednesday, October 20, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.  
Minutes Approved 11-18-2021

Disability Commission joined Grafton Cable Oversight Committee's regular meeting to discuss closed captioning and any other accessibility-related enhancements.

Disability Commission Membership: Roger Trahan, Jr. (Chair), Daryl Rynning (Vice Chair), Kristie Proctor (Clerk), Robert Berger (Select Board Rep as elected or appointed town official), Catherine Dore, Robert Polsinelli, Laura Deneen.

Cable Oversight Committee Membership: James Gallagher (Chair), Robert Hassinger (Vice Chair), Robert DeToma (Clerk), Robert Berger, John Kelley, Corson Wyman, Lisa Kelley.

**Roger Trahan** introduced the Disability Commission and indicated the purpose of the meeting to discuss closed captioning and accessibility in the spirit of helpfulness.

**Kristie Proctor:** the Disability Commission is happy to partner with the town.

We all acknowledge the ADA is 30 years old and time has come to explore solutions. Acknowledge our members' expertise is not digital recordings for broadcast. Requirement to use cc videos for course curriculum at QCC.

Time to bring forward accessibility and cc for taping, production, and zoom meetings.

**Laura Deneen**

For the benefit of the town, access needs to be prioritized.

**Jim Gallagher**

Offer to tour the studio and see the equipment.

CC has always been on the front burner.

Bob has been working to research cc for the GCTV.

**Bob Berger**

Can't produce or use the internet on the studio and don't have the equipment.  
Two different issues.

Hybrid meetings won't work for cc, only when zoom host is on screen and speaking.

**Bob DeToma**

Some surrounding towns have reported back that they can't do it due to financial resources – understanding is that this VOD channel/platform it would not have CC; same with our youtube channel, it can be done but not perfect.

Would have to purchase equipment and then subscribe for \$15,000 a year per channel. Multiply times three.

Transcription is \$250.00 an hour for a live transcriber.

**Roger:** How autonomous is GCTV versus the town?

**Jim:** Not financed through the town, but the cable bill. We pay the town rent for the cable station room.

**Jack:** not able to begin captioning in the middle of the meeting. GCTV does not zoom. Does not offer playback. Doesn't capture the closed captioning.

**Laura** explained cc settings in advanced settings. Can't change once the meeting starts. Kristie and Jack agreed.

**Introduce Sony Padow** – Need CC to understand what is being said and is knowledgeable about cc. Especially zoom (free setting). Caveat – host has to enable for the session beforehand. Can provide instructions to anyone. WISE at Assumption University uses cc (Worcester Institute for Senior Education).

**Jim** thanked Sony for her assistance. We would like to share this information with the community.

**Amy Marr** – School Committee Chair – a challenge is that

1) at any time, the company can decide to charge for CC, so we {school committee} are using third party vendor for CC.

2) Several town zoom accounts so these hosts would need training on setting up the meeting for cc.

Thank you for your time.

**Bob DeToma**– both committees should ask the TA or Select Board to set a policy that the zoom meetings should be closed-captioned.

Budget for GCTV is \$325,000 annually. Don't have the money to do CC. Rent is \$150,000 a year.

**Jack** – Likes CC and wants to clarify the terminology about spending money on CC for the three Charter channels. We want this, it is just a means of being able to do this. CC available to those watching. Youtube, we have it enabled for board meetings and such.

**Kristie** - Help me understand...how can MA allow for this to occur in their mandate for each town to have a local TV station?

**Jim** – contract with Charter explanation – no centralized commonwealth.

**Daryl** – Telecommunications Act of 1996 not have an impact?

**Bob Hassinger** – FCC has not required cc for public access.

**Daryl** – how are cable operators and video distributors allowed to do this?

**Bob H** – these are the rules we got. Hybrid meetings are technologically challenging. We don't have that type of \$\$ at the present.

**Jim** – everyone at this committee has been interested in this for a long time.

**Laura** – Don't know the answer but there a lot of good minds who can help solve this. What worries me is the possibility that this exposure leaves the town vulnerable to lawsuit or legal action. Bring awareness of the cost of inaction and potential of an impending lawsuit.

**Roger** – Title II of the ADA for state and local governments, not sure how a cable station exists in a vacuum separate from the town? Can the town purchase capital equipment? Can things be installed from the town budget?

**Bob H.** - funding source as town? It could work.

**Roger** – hypothetical example with chairs for the conference room and town lent chairs to the studio....

**Bob H** – would love for Evan to put money in our budget.

**Lisa** – This is the right thing to do, not because we might be sued – can we plan and look for grants?

**Jim** – Yes – let's get things moving and tour the studio to begin. Bringing us together certainly gets the ball rolling. Let's see what we have and what we can do. This is a right.

**Bob DeToma**— let's review what we discussed:

1. Five town zoom accounts with little control over how we can update
2. Willing to pursue a conversation with TA about this topic
3. Discussed re-broadcast of town meeting can have the cc turned on
4. Research apps and software to use with broadcast equipment which are compatible
5. We have two studios but not adaptable to the hybrid model.
6. Our cable attorney who negotiates our contracts with Charter specializes in cable law. Ask him for insight on this. Despite the 30 year old ADA there are many loopholes. How do we pursue this going forward?

**Roger** - we all agree that Bob DeToma will speak with Evan Brassard about this issue or Bob Berger?

**Jim** – that is a great idea for both Bob's to speak with Evan. Also, make sure Sony is used to spread this message.

**Bob H.** - the plan starts with what is possible and looking at the cost...

**Jim** – talking about what we should do since this is the right thing to do.

**Roger** – unique aspect of town meeting, spoke with Dawn Anderson to encourage her to reach out to statewide organization of town moderators to explore solutions for cc town meetings.

**Daryl** – Money and having a plan – good idea to figure out how much things are going to cost and we could as a commission explore grants for this type of endeavor.

**Laura** – will call the commission tomorrow and ask about grants for towns for cc.

**Roger** noted time to adjourn the Disability Commission.

**Action:** Daryl made a motion to adjourn the Disability Commissions portion of the meeting. Bob Berger seconded.

No discussion on motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote:

DR	Yes
KP	Yes
RP	Yes
LD	Yes
CD	Yes
RT	Yes

Roger declared the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristie Proctor, Clerk